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CONNECTICUT POST

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Autumn Driscoll/Staff photographer

Newtown back in school

Classes resume for most students, but Sandy Hook, Head O'Meadow stay closed

By Tom Cleary,
John Pirro and
Linda Tuccio-Koonz

NEWTOWN — A mysterious threat kept students from Head O'Meadow Elementary, but four other Newtown schools reopened without incident Tuesday, four days after a shocking mass murder traumatized and united this close-knit community.

Police were on high alert, and Sandy Hook Elementary School — where 20 students and six staffers were gunned down by 20-year-

old Adam Lanza on Friday — remained closed.

A lockdown was ordered at Head O'Meadow, on Boggs Hill Road, before students arrived for classes, which had been scheduled to start two hours late.

But police, school and town officials remained mum throughout the day on what provoked the action.

Parents were notified of the closing in a message from the school's principal, who said police predicted there would be "some threats" and advised them

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Above, students leave Hawley School in Newtown on Tuesday after their first day at school since Friday's shooting. Left, elementary school student James Mattioli's casket is carried from St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown.

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THE 911 TAPES

Confusion reigned at shooting scene

By Libor Jany

NEWTOWN — In the frantic moments after a gunman stormed into Sandy Hook Elementary School on Friday and gunned down 26 people, most of them children, authorities expected to encounter a second shooter as they converged on the building, according to a copy of a 911 tape that was

independently verified by Hearst Connecticut Newspapers on Tuesday.

"I have reports of two shooters running past the building, past the gym, which would be rear," a dispatcher said on the tape, before trailing off. Shortly afterward, the operator told a State Police trooper who was racing to the scene from

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"I have reports of two shooters running past the building, past the gym, which would be rear," a dispatcher is heard saying on the 911 recording, before trailing off.

'IT COULD HAVE BEEN ME'

Help for victims' families coming from near and far

By Amanda Cuda

As a chiropractor, Eugene Cayer's specialty is cracking people's spines to ease tension and pain.

But over the past few days, he has witnessed the kind of searing agony that no one can easily fix.

"Whenever someone loses a child, it rocks a parent to the core. Everybody gets that feeling of 'It could have been me,'" said Cayer, who runs a practice on South

Main Street in Newtown.

Everyone who comes through his office has been affected in some way by the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School that left 26 people dead, 20 of them children.

So Cayer decided to help. On Saturday between 9 a.m. and noon, he will offer a variety of services for free to those affected by the shooting, including spinal

See Help on A4

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POST

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN



Brian A. Pounds/Staff photographer

Cindy Mattioli and Anna Mattioli, mother and sister of James Mattioli, one of the students killed in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, embrace clergy following James Mattioli's funeral at St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown on Tuesday.

6-YEAR-OLD BOY LOVED SPORTS, HAMBURGERS

Friends, family say goodbye to 'J'



Contributed photo

James Mattioli

By Linda Conner Lambeck

NEWTOWN — A hearse obscured the view of the manger outside St. Rose of Lima Church on Tuesday during the first of two funerals for victims of last week's mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Inside the church, James Mattioli's mother, Cindy, spoke about the positive, endearing things she remembered about her son, said one person who attended the funeral, but did not give her name.

"It was a powerful message," she said.

James, who was called 'J' by family and friends, was a delightful

6-year-old boy who loved sports and hamburgers with ketchup, according to accounts. He also loved to sing at the top of his lungs and swim like a fish.

James was an early riser and, according to family members, was his father, Mark's, "mini-me."

He especially loved being outside, even on days like Tuesday, when a chilling drizzle fell across the church lawn, clinging to white angels hung on a tree framed by a growing collection of candles, flowers and balloons.

Many who walked past the display on their way to the church stopped at the memorial. Some added to it.

"Heaven gained an angel today," read one sign posted outside the church.

There were lots of hugs and tears before and after the service. James' mourners included children his own age, some in suits, and many who didn't know him.

As the church bells began to toll, Richard Rosiak, a former New Britain resident visiting the area from California, said he stopped by with his two young daughters to pay their respects.

"It really didn't hit me until this morning when I started hearing about it. Normally, when you are going to a funeral, you are expecting someone older," Rosiak said.

Another couple, Radya and George Martino, drove to Newtown from Queens, N.Y. Radya Martino said she hasn't stopped crying since Friday, the day a 20-year-old gunman shot and killed 20 students and six staff members at the school.

"I prayed for them in my mosque Friday," she said.

The street in front of St. Rose of Lima Church was jammed with police motorcycles and television news trucks.

About halfway into the funeral for James, mourners for Jessica Rekos, another 6-year-old victim, started to arrive and were directed to a nearby school to wait.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY POLICE OFFER TO HELP

Thin blue line stretches across Newtown

By John Nickerson

STAMFORD — Police from across Fairfield County are volunteering to help their fellow officers in Newtown in the aftermath of Friday's elementary school massacre that killed 20 first-graders and six teachers and administrators.

In Stamford, Assistant Chief James Metheny said city officers have "inundated" the department with requests to go to Newtown on their own time and without pay to help after the police department there asked for assistance from neighboring communities.

On Monday, Greenwich and Stamford police were among the officers escorting two Sandy Hook Elementary School students who were laid to rest after funerals in Fairfield and Newtown. Others are filling in for entire shifts to help out.

Metheny said that the arrangement has nothing to do with the mutual aid agreement when one department or another is stretched thin and calls for backup from nearby police departments.

"These guys step up as volunteers for everything," he said. "They are going on their own time 24 hours per day to work for the people of Newtown and Newtown PD."

Norwalk Police Chief Thomas Kulhawik said he has one officer who lives in Newtown who has been volunteering on a regular basis. While there were some of

ficers who volunteered, Kulhawik said the department decided to invoke the mutual aid agreement and has been sending two paid officers to Newtown per shift to help out.

"We want to make sure we are giving them the resources that they need when they need it. At this point, we can schedule the officers and get radios from the Newtown Police Department," Kulhawik said. "Everybody is chipping in so it is not a drain on one individual department, and we have a plan in place to coordinate the help."

Chiefs around Fairfield County have volunteered to help Newtown Chief Michael Kehoe with his responsibilities, Kulhawik said. Kulhawik is scheduled to help out in Newtown on Thursday afternoon to support Kehoe.

Greenwich Police Chief James Heavey and Deputy Chief Mark Marino went to Newtown on Monday to assist Kehoe. Greenwich is providing six officers a day — two per every eight-hour shift — through the end of the week.

"They are all volunteers," said Greenwich police spokesman Lt. John Brown. "They are doing this on their own time. There is no overtime or compensation."

At the end of the week, Heavey will reassess whether Greenwich police are still needed.

"We are doing this for the victims and their families, for the

community and for our brother officers," Brown said.

Metheny said volunteering is a tradition in the Stamford department, and volunteers have gone everywhere from Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina to lower Manhattan after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Stamford police union President Joseph Kennedy said he volunteered to help out with crowd control and traffic at Monday's funeral for Jack Pinto in Newtown.

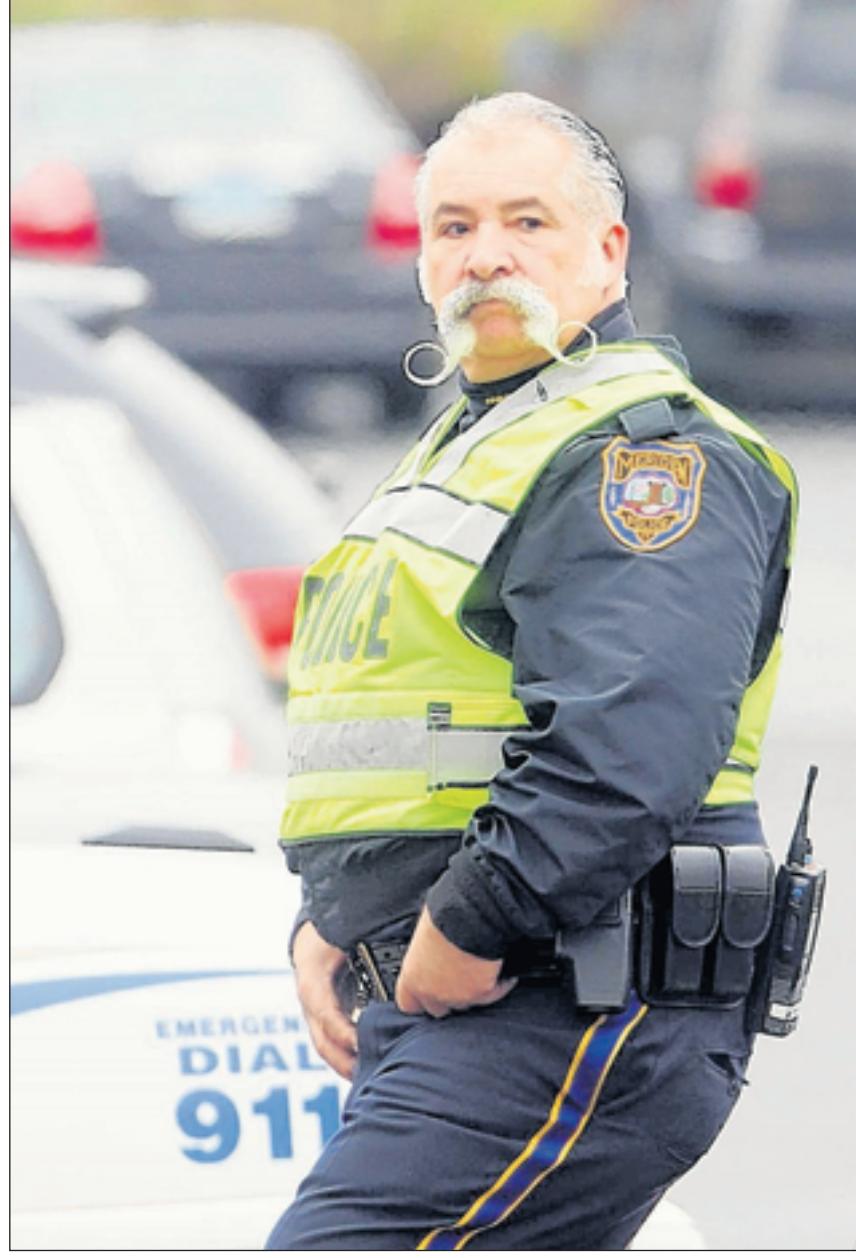
"You have to do something," Kennedy said. "Police, fire, EMS, teachers are always spoken of in the same world. Our lives are always intersecting. We are all parents. Anyway we can help, because none of us are going to make any sense of this. I can't get my head around it and I can only imagine what the first responders in Newtown are going through."

Kennedy said the police union is encouraging volunteers to sign up.

While in Newtown on Monday, Kennedy said he saw officers from Norwalk, Greenwich, Bridgeport, Danbury, Brookfield and Oxford doing what he figures was the same thing — volunteering.

He said Stamford has left two city police cruisers in Newtown, which would allow officers to drive directly to Newtown and use the city vehicles to assist the local department.

"They are not looking for fanfare, they are just trying to help," Kennedy said.



A Meriden police officer is on duty during Tuesday's funeral services for 6-year-old Jessica Rekos at St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown. Police officers from nearby towns are volunteering to help Newtown officers.

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN



Autumn Driscoll/Staff photographer

Friends and family leave funeral services for Jessica Rekos, one of 20 children killed in a mass shooting Friday at Sandy Hook Elementary School, are held Tuesday morning at St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church in Newtown.

FUNERAL SERVICES HELD FOR JESSICA REKOS

'It was full of angels'

By Robert Miller

NEWTOWN — Jessica Rekos was remembered Tuesday as a smart 6-year-old girl who loved her siblings, wanted real cowboy boots for Christmas and ran as much of her world as she could manage.

Those attending a memorial service for Jessica at St. Rose of Lima Church on Tuesday described it as a moving, beautiful event. "It was full of angels," said Bruce Blanchard, of New Milford, who was at the service that began under dark gray skies and ended in sunlight 90 minutes later.

Jessica was one of the 20 children and six adults murdered at Sandy Hook Elementary School on Friday. The emotional highlight of the service was a eulogy delivered by Jessica's mother, Krista Rekos.

Blanchard said Krista Rekos told the full church of her daughter's desire for cowboy boots this Christmas.

He also said that Krista Rekos told the crowd that her daughter, even at 6, was, in effect, "the boss" of the household.

Krista Rekos is a sixth-grade teacher at the Blackham School in Bridgeport.

Two of her former students, O'Brian Reynolds,



Those attending funeral services for Jessica Rekos leave St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church in Newtown on Tuesday.

16, and Iman Doss, 17, both of Bridgeport attended the service.

Afterward, Doss said their teacher told her classes several stories about her daughter. One of them involved the time when Jessica was throwing a tantrum and wouldn't stop. Krista decided to take away her daughter's shoes and put them in the basement. Jessica then proceeded to lock her mother in the basement.

"It was a happy moment," Doss said. "Then she started talking about when she went to school that day and started crying."

"She would always come to school and tell us stories about her daughter," Doss said.

During the service, Jessica's cousin, Erin Lafferty, sang a tribute song and her aunt, Karla Lafferty, offered prayers.

A grandfather, a family friend and Jessica's riding instructor were among the gift bearers during the service.

Scores of teachers from Bridgeport and School Superintendent Paul Vallas attended the service.

The service was one of five scheduled this week at St. Rose of Lima Church.

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy attended, and a motorcycle guard of 14 police officers from seven departments escorted the funeral cortège to the church.

Small white angels hung from the bare branches of a shrub outside the church. A bank of flowers, balloons and stuffed animals were on the ground below a shelf of candles. The church's bells tolled a single repetitive note throughout the morning.

Access into the church was closely guarded by police. Yellow crime scene tape blocked entry to the church across its lawns.



Mourners embrace outside St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church in Newtown.

And yet, throughout the service, people asked permission simply to add to the growing bank of bouquets and teddy bears outside the church.

"I'm from New York," he said. "But my roots are from Mississippi."

George and Radia Martino drove up from Howard's Beach in Queens, a neighborhood devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

"We just came to express our solidarity with the people and the town," Martino said. "We wanted to express our sorrow."

Staff writer Linda Lambeck contributed to this report. bmiller@newstimes.com; 203-731-3345

'Tribute to Newtown' to be held Wednesday

STAFF REPORTS

DANBURY — A "Tribute to Newtown" is planned for 7 p.m. Wednesday at the O'Neill Center on the Westside campus of Western Connecticut State University.

Previous reports had erroneously listed the event as being held Thursday.

The tribute, organized by mayors and first selectmen from Greater Danbury, will be a way for residents of Bethel, Bridgewater,

Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield and Sherman to come together in the aftermath of Friday's mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, organizers said.

The tribute will include various musical performances from choirs and musicians, as well as remarks by community leaders, including Western Connecticut State University

President James Schmotter. For information, contact Boughton's office, at 203-797-4511, or the Town of New Fairfield at 203-312-5600.

United Way Fund

The United Way of Western Connecticut, in partnership with Newtown Savings Bank, has created the "Sandy Hook School Support Fund" to provide support services to the families and community members. Donations may be mailed to:

Sandy Hook School Support Fund, c/o Newtown Savings Bank, 39 Main St., Newtown CT 06470.

Or they may be dropped off at any Newtown Savings Bank branch.

For questions about your check donation within local Newtown Savings Bank branches, please call 800-461-0672. Or, at the United Way, call David Deschenes, 203-792-5330 ext. 239, or Isabel Almeida, 203-792-5330 ext. 106. You can also donate

by credit card. Go to: <https://newtown.uwwesternct.org/>

Newtown Alumni Relief Fund

Residents and former residents have formed the Newtown Alumni Fund to provide relief for the families affected by the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. Donations will be administered and distributed through the Newtown Rotary Club, with no administrative costs or fees.

All contributions will go directly to the community affected by this incident. A donor has offered to match the first \$2,000 in donations.

Checks should be made payable to Newtown Rotary Club, Sandy Hook School Fund, with "Newtown Alumni Fund" in the memo section, and mailed to Newtown Alumni Fund, P.O. Box 3217, Newtown, CT 06470.

For information, visit www.newtownalumni-fund.org.

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

Newtown students go back to class

Continued from A1
to keep their children home for the day.

Numerous calls to police, school and town officials and a special public information line established to handle the onslaught of media inquiries in the wake of the shootings were not returned.

It remains unclear when the Sandy Hook students will return to school, but it will likely not be until after Jan. 1, following the students' winter break.

"The officials in Newtown will make that call," said Monroe Superintendent James C. Agostine.

Monroe police Lt. Brian McCauley said officials in town are working to make sure the school is ready and safe for students.

While tension appeared high outside the Newtown schools, many students were glad to be back as teachers helped them adjust.

"I wasn't really looking forward to going back to school because I knew a lot of my friends weren't going, because a lot of people thought it was too soon," said Jaden Albrect, who returned to Newtown Middle School on Tuesday.

But the 13-year-old said once she was there, she felt it was a good place to be.

Over the weekend, she and friends had spoken with a grief counselor at Reed Intermediate School; they also placed a memorial sign in Sandy Hook in honor of a friend's sibling who was a victim in the school shooting.

"I guess it was good to try and get back to normal," Jaden said. "It was sort of sad still and no one really knew how to react. But the teachers made a point to say how glad they were to see everyone."

"It was good to know they care so much and that they care about our safety," she added. "I do feel safe in school. I know our teachers would do anything to protect us, they made a point of saying that."

Elsewhere, holiday shoppers in Danbury found one glaring lack of goods Tuesday: guns at Dick's Sporting Goods at the Danbury Fair mall.

The outdoors corner of

the sports superstore still featured bullets, bows, camouflage suits, targets, knives, vests, scopes, gun cleaners, kickback reducers and one Nerf rifle for kids, but the three walls of gun racks were empty.

"What'd you put them on lockdown?" an elderly man asked.

"Out of respect for the community," a Dick's Sporting Goods employee replied. "We took them down this morning."

Dick's Sporting Goods said they will suspend the sales of certain semi-automatic rifles across the country.

Meanwhile, a gun show scheduled for January in Danbury was canceled Tuesday. The Danbury Gun & Knife Show's promoter, Big Al's Silver Bullet Productions, announced on its website that the event scheduled for Jan. 5-6 at the Crown Plaza hotel would not take place.

A call to Big Al's was picked up Tuesday afternoon by a person who responded, "No comment," when asked why the gun show was canceled.

Video games have also become a focus of the investigation into shooter Adam Lanza. Sources told Hearst Connecticut Newspapers that video games and other electronics were found inside the shooter's Yogananda Street home.

Though the source did not specify what games Lanza enjoyed playing, a plumber who spent time working in the house told British newspaper The Sun that Lanza spent a lot of time playing the first-person war simulation game "Call of Duty." The plumber, 45-year-old Newtown resident Peter Wlasuk, said Tuesday that Lanza lived in the basement of the house. His walls were covered by gun and military posters, Wlasuk told the newspaper.

Gamers across the country plan a "online shooter cease fire" for Friday, the same day the state will observe a moment of silence to remember the shooting victims. The "day of cease fire," was proposed by GamerFit-Nation Inc's CEO Antwand

Zachary Johnston, 2, and Nathan Johnston, 4, of Easton, wear the new fire helmets they received from firefighters at the Sandy Hook Volunteer Fire Department in Newtown on Tuesday. The boys, with their mother, Joelle Johnston, and neighbor Carolette Johnson, visited the Sandy Hook firehouse Tuesday to deliver a gift to first responders.



Newtown Police talk to parents picking up their children from Hawley School on Tuesday following their first day back at school since Friday's mass shooting in Newtown.

Pearman, and calls for players to stop playing online shooting games like Call of Duty on Friday.

On the Facebook page for the event, the organizers say clearly, "we are not blaming video games!"

"We are simply making a statement that we as gamers are not going to sit back and ignore the lives that were lost. Instead we will embrace (sic) the families with our love and support," Pearman said on Facebook.

Outgoing U.S. Sen. Joseph Lieberman, I-Conn., spoke on the Senate floor Tuesday saying violent video games can turn some gamers into killers.

"Very often these young men have an almost hypnotic involvement in some form of violence in our entertainment culture, particularly violent video games," Lieberman said. "And then they obtain guns and become not just troubled young men but mass murderers."

Back in Newtown, police

were highly visible outside schools in Newtown on Tuesday.

At Hawleyville Elementary School, officers turned back a reporter as he approached the entrance, and parents arriving to pick up their children at the end of the day had to identify themselves to police.

At Middle Gate Elementary School, a reporter who attempted to interview school personnel about returning to work was also questioned by two police officers.

Such security is likely to remain in effect for some time.

At Newtown Middle School, eighth-grader Max Ames said he was glad to be back in class.

"I felt relieved to see everyone. I was looking forward to it," he said.

Teachers asked students how they were feeling and if their families were OK.

"That made me feel safe and comforted," said Max, 13.

Teachers eased the kids back into their lessons, but

also asked them to draw posters to brighten the empty walls of the Chalk Hill School in Monroe, where Sandy Hook students will eventually attend school.

During first period, Max said teachers asked students to write questions and comments on note cards to be used for a discussion about the Sandy Hook tragedy.

"I drew a picture that said 'Don't Worry, Be Happy,'" said Max.

Jaden said at first she thought it was too soon to go back.

"But after I went," she said Tuesday, "I thought it was good to be back and see other people."

As students returned to school and police continued to piece together its investigation, rumors continued to swirl about what led Lanza to kill 20 children and six school staffers at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

The son of a pastor at a Monroe church where some victims' families worship told Fox News that Nancy Lanza was seeking conservatorship because she could no longer control her son, and planned to have him committed. Joshua Flashman, 25, said Adam Lanza may have been upset by this, setting him off.

But Tuesday night, Flashman's father issued a statement to lohud.com denying the report and saying it was "hearsay," and "not confirmed."

The website also spoke to the pastor's secretary, who said two state police officers came to the church earlier in the day to interview someone.

Staff writer Tim Loh contributed to this report.

911 tapes shed light on shooting

Continued from A1
the nearby Troop A barracks in Southbury to "make sure you have your vest on."

A review of the recording suggests that authorities were unaware of the grisly scene they were walking into.

Confusion reigned among authorities as SWAT team members and other officers swept the building for several hours, triggering a wave of erroneous media reports.

At one point, several major

networks, including CNN, Fox News and The Associated Press, were reporting that the shooter was Ryan Lanza, 24, citing a law enforcement source familiar with the investigation. A number of news outlets also raised the possibility that there was a second gunman.

Investigators cast a dragnet over the town and neighboring communities to try to catch the phantom gunman.

By the end of the day Friday, investigators said they were confident that the suspected shooter was Ryan Lanza's 20-year-old brother, Adam, and that he acted alone. Any reports that another suspect fled the scene in a purple van were unfounded, they said.

The two-hour-long recording, which was authenticated

Tuesday by several current

and former emergency

dispatchers, surfaced on YouTube. It captures the aftermath of the shooting that ended only after 26 people — 20 of whom were children, none older than 7 — were killed in a fusillade of bullets.

Bursts of gunfire were heard coming from Sandy Hook Elementary School over an 11-minute period, starting around 9:35 a.m.

Friday, according to a review of the call. The details of what happened inside the building during that window are still being sorted out by investigators.

Some parts of the transmission were encrypted and thus inaudible.

Investigators said Lanza first killed his mother at their home on Yogananda Street, then drove to the school, armed with a rifle, two handguns and a shotgun. Initial reports indicated that the shooter "could have multiple weapons, including long rifle and shotguns," the recording shows.

Around 10 a.m., first responders discovered the extent of the carnage inside Sandy Hook Elementary School.

"We need buses here, ASAP. Call Danbury if you have to," an unidentified voice on the line says. "Get me the bus up here right away. Send the ambulance up, right up to me."

When a dispatcher asked about how many ambulances were needed, someone replied that "they're not giving us a number."

The area was soon swarming with local and state police, as well as agents from the FBI, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and other agencies.

Multiple news outlets reported that Adam Lanza shot himself as authorities closed in.

Witnesses at the scene Friday morning reported seeing a man in handcuffs being led out of the woods next to the school by police. The man, who witnesses said was wearing camouflage pants, insisted on his innocence as he was being led to a State Police cruiser while parents looked on.

He apparently was released after being questioned.

Later that day, it was reported that authorities were hunting for a purple van in Danbury and Newtown that was believed to have been tied to the shooting. That lead also turned out to be an apparent dead end.

Help available to families

Continued from A1

adjustments, chair massages and acupuncture.

He is one of hundreds to step up in the wake of last week's tragedy to offer Newtown and Sandy Hook residents everything from a hot meal to a cup of coffee to counseling services and beyond.

Funeral costs, including caskets for the young victims, have been covered by donations from various vendors, coordinated by the Connecticut Funeral Directors Association.

Scholarships and memorial funds have sprung up to provide financial support for families affected by the shootings, and people are already giving generously.

Arthur Sorrentino, spokesman for the University of Connecticut Foundation, said a scholarship fund set up to honor those who died received more than 650 donations, totaling more than \$33,000, in its first 24 hours. That doesn't include an \$80,000 "lead gift" from women's basketball coach Geno Auriemma and his wife.

"We would characterize this as a very encouraging response," Sorrentino said.

Much of the outpouring has been in form of simple gestures, such as the family

Reaching out

Here are some resources available in the wake of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings.

► The Sandy Hook Memorial Scholarship Fund at the University of Connecticut will provide financial aid for any students who attend the school, as well as siblings of the children killed in the attack and dependents of the adults who died in the shooting. To donate, visit www.friends.uconn.edu/sandyhook.

► The Connecticut Funeral Directors Association has set up a fund to aid the families of those who died. Visit www.ctfd.org.

► The Dignity Memorial network of funeral, cremation and cemetery providers is making its Compassion Helpline available at no charge to families and friends of the victims, as well as others affected by the shooting. Call 800-854-8020.

► Dr. Cayer's Health and Wellness Center, 97 South Main St., Newtown, will offer free adjustments, chair massage and other services between 9 a.m. and noon Saturday for those affected by the shooting.

who lives near Chalk Hill School in Monroe, where the surviving Sandy Hook students will go to school when they return to class. They hung a banner welcoming the students and staff. The Home Depot in Trumbull donated the supplies.

Random acts of kindness have come from all over the country, including the elderly San Diego woman who called the Stone River Grill, located near the elementary school and donated \$150 so a family could have a meal.

Gary Seri, owner of the restaurant, said he has received many calls like that.

Since his restaurant has been featured frequently in TV

news reports on the shooting, it has become a bit of a lifeline for strangers across the country looking to help.

"People have been calling, saying, 'Put \$15 on my credit card and buy someone a dessert,'" Seri said. "They just want to help. They feel very helpless from where they are, and this is a means for them to have done something."

That is the same reason calls have been pouring in to florists throughout the region.

Valorie Correa, co-owner of Judd's Flowers in Danbury, said hers is one of several flower shops getting orders from all over the

world for arrangements to be sent to the funerals of the many victims, or to one of the many memorials erected in Sandy Hook.

One call even came from Australia, Correa said.

"They just want to do something," she said. "They were so touched by what happened here. (The orders are) just coming in from all over. I think the Newtown community appreciates the support. It's just a little overwhelming."

In addition to the families, some are focusing their kindness on the many emergency workers and clergy who have been working around the clock since the shooting. Cayer said he

would soon be heading out to offer free chiropractic service to Monsignor Robert Weiss, pastor of Saint Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church, who has been one of the community's spiritual leaders following the tragedy. "He probably hasn't slept in four days," Cayer said.

Michael Landry, owner of Demitasse Cafe in Newtown, has donated urns of coffee to service workers at the firehouse "so they stay warm. They're out there 24-7, and it's cold."

acuda@ctpost.com; 203-330-6290; twitter.com/Amandacuda; <http://blog.ctnews.com/whatthehealth/>



Valorie Correa, co-owner of Judd's Flowers in Danbury, works on an arrangement of flowers ordered for one of the memorials for the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. Her business has received an abundance of similar orders, some in quantities of 26, one for each of the victims.

Carol Kaliff/Staff photographer

Carol Kaliff/

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

GROUP CONDEMS 'HORRIFIC MURDERS'

NRA: 'Meaningful contributions' to gun debate

By Dan Freedman

WASHINGTON — The National Rifle Association on Tuesday broke its silence over the Newtown, Conn., tragedy just enough to say it would offer "meaningful contributions" aimed at preventing another mass-shooting incident.

Faced with a crescendo of calls for gun control in the wake of last week's Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in which a gunman armed with a Bushmaster AR-15 .223 semi-automatic rifle killed 20 children and six adults, the NRA said it was not commenting "as a matter of decency" while

families mourned and the police investigation continued.

But the nation's premier advocacy and lobbying organization for gun owners said in a statement: "The National Rifle Association of America is made up of four million moms and dads, sons and daughters — and we were shocked, saddened and heartbroken by the news of the horrific and senseless murders in Newtown."

In the statement, the group said it "is prepared to offer meaningful contributions to help make sure this never happens again." It did not elaborate on what those "contributions" might entail, or whether it would sit down with President

Barack Obama and lawmakers on Capitol Hill to discuss an updated assault weapons ban to be introduced by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., and the proposal of Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., to expand background checks for individuals purchasing guns.

The group said it would hold a news conference on Friday. NRA director of public affairs Andrew Arulanandam did not respond to an email request for further explanation.

The NRA has been an implacable foe of gun control, seeing even limited proposals such as last year's requirement that border-state firearms dealers report multiple semi-

automatic rifle purchases to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives as threats to Second Amendment rights.

"They are an effective lobbying machine because a consistent portion of their membership makes the calls, talks to members of Congress and shows up at their town meetings," said Josh Sugarman, a Newtown, Conn., native who is director of the Violence Policy Center and author of a book "NRA: Money, Firepower and Fear." Members "follow directions from the NRA without question. That's their greatest asset."

NRA's PAC, the NRA Political Victory Fund, invested more than

\$17 million in the 2012 election but their chosen candidates mostly went down to defeat, including GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney.

That's a far cry from the group's heyday in 1994 when it was widely credited with winning control of the House and Senate for Republicans midway through Democratic President Bill Clinton's first term. The Republican sweep came just two months after Congress approved Feinstein's original assault weapons ban, which expired in 2004.

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ANTI-VIOLENCE LEGISLATION

Obama, lawmakers endorse ban on assault weapons

By Charles J. Lewis

WASHINGTON — The Connecticut congressional delegation joined President Barack Obama on Tuesday in endorsing a new federal ban on assault weapons in the wake of the Newtown school massacre where a 20-year-old man used an assault rifle to murder 20 children and six adults.

Obama is "actively supportive" of efforts to reinstate an assault weapons ban, White House spokesman Jay Carney said Tuesday. The president, in his remarks Sunday night at Newtown High School, had urged unspecified actions to curb the rash of mass shootings. As a member of the Senate he had supported a ban.

Obama "does want to move," Carney told reporters. "He wants to move in the coming weeks, which is a fairly short period of time. And while he supports, and strongly, renewal of the assault weapons ban ... he wants to expand the conversation beyond those specific areas of legislation to look at other ways we can address this problem."

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., the author of the assault weapons ban that became law in 1994 but expired in 2004, says she will introduce an "updated" assault weapons ban when Congress convenes Jan. 3.

Her new bill would outlaw 100 specifically named firearms, weapons that can accept detachable magazines as well as certain semiautomatic rifles, handguns and shotguns that can accept a detachable magazine and semiautomatic rifles and handguns with a fixed magazine that can accept more than 10 rounds.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., took the floor of the Senate on Tuesday to describe how Adam Lanza, armed with a Bushmaster AR-15 semi-automatic rifle, a 10 mm Glock handgun, a 9 mm Sig Sauer pistol, and magazines filled with hundreds of rounds of ammunition, invaded

Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown and killed students and staffers.

"There is no single new law, no simple solution, that will be a cure-all" to the violence, Blumenthal said, "but there are sound, sensible steps that we can take. ... We need to do something to effectively ban assault weapons. I am talking about weapons that are not designed for self-defense or hunting, but rather for killing and maiming human beings, often as many as possible, as fast as possible. Weapons that are civilian versions of military weapons. There is no reason that such weapons should be for sale today in America."

Ben Marter, a spokesman for Sen.-elect and current U.S. Rep. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., said the lawmaker "won't just vote for (a ban) — he'll work hard to make sure that it passes."

The state's other House members — Reps. Jim Himes, D-Greenwich, Rosa DeLauro, D-New Haven, Joe Courtney, D-Vernon, John Larson, D-East Hartford — also said they supported a ban on assault weapons, though they would wait until they saw specific legislative language before endorsing any particular bill.

The drive to reinstate the assault weapons ban also picked up the endorsement of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which announced its support of the legislation that Feinstein is preparing.

Feinstein sponsored the 1994 ban that outlawed 18 specific models of semiautomatic weapons. The law expired in 2004 and lawmakers, mainly Republicans, refused to renew it.

By pushing for a new assault weapons ban, the Obama administration could reap political benefits among suburban voters who abhor weapons of that type. On the other hand, if House Republicans thwart any effort to renew the ban, the Obama administration could gain among those voters who would blame Republicans for blocking a new ban.

FAITH AMID OVERWHELMING GRIEF



Jeff Fuller, of Newtown, sets up a wooden cross in front of a memorial at the main intersection at Sandy Hook in Newtown on Tuesday. Memorials in Sandy Hook and Newtown continue to grow following last Friday's mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Ned Gerard/Staff photographer

Funerals continue for shooting victims

STAFF REPORTS

The funerals for victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings continue Wednesday.

The funeral for **Victoria Leigh Soto**, a teacher at the school, is scheduled for Wednesday at 10 a.m. at Lordship Community Church, 190 Prospect Drive, Stratford. Burial will follow at Union Cemetery in Stratford. Calling hours will be 3 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at Adzima Funeral Home, 50 Paradise Green Place, Stratford.

The funeral for **Daniel Barden**, 7, will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday at St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church, 46 Church Hill Road, Newtown. Burial will follow at St. Rose Cemetery on Cherry Street, at the corner of Black Cherry Lane. Friends can call at the church, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday.

The family of **Chase Kowalski** will receive friends at the Spadaccino and Leo P. Gallagher & Son Funeral Home in Monroe on Wednesday from 2 to 6

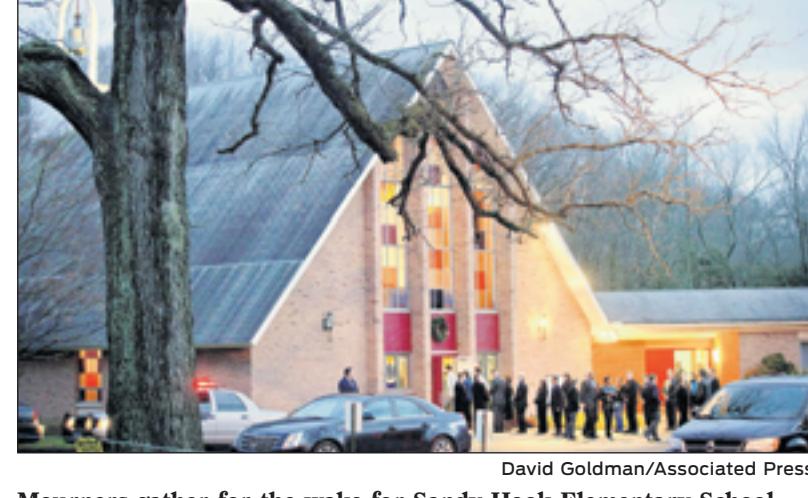
p.m. with prayer vigils throughout the afternoon. The family asks that the public visitation end at 5:45 to allow a brief period of privacy.

A Mass of Christian Burial for **Caroline P. Previdi** will be held at noon Wednesday at St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church, Burial will be private, and arrangements are under the care of Green Funeral Home, Danbury.

The funeral for **Charlotte H. Bacon** will be held at Christ the King Lutheran Church on Wednesday at 1 p.m., followed by burial at Newtown Village Cemetery. Calling hours are at the church on Tuesday from 4 to 7 p.m.

The funeral for **Rachel D'Avino**, 29, will be held Friday at the Church of Nativity, East Street, Bethlehem, Conn., at 11 a.m. Burial will be at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Watertown. Friends may call at Woodbury Funeral Home of Munson-Lovetere, 2 School St., Woodbury, on Thursday from 2 to 4 p.m.

A funeral Mass for **Catherine**



Mourners gather for the wake for Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting victim Charlotte Helen Bacon, 6, at Christ the King Lutheran Church on Tuesday.

Hubbard, 6, will be held Thursday at 10 a.m. at St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church in Newtown. Burial will follow at St. Rose Cemetery, Cherry Street. Calling hours are Wednesday from 4 to 7 p.m. at the church.

The funeral of **Benjamin Andrew Wheeler**, 6, will be held Thursday at 11 a.m. at All Trinity Episcopal Church at 36 Main St., Newtown. Calling hours are Wednesday from 4

to 8 p.m. at the church. Burial will be private.

A public memorial service for **Dylan Christopher Jack Hockley**, 6, will be held at 1 p.m. Friday at Walnut Hill Community Church at 156 Walnut Hill Road, Bethel.

Calling hours for **Jesse McCord Lewis**, 6, will be Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon at Honan Funeral Home, 58 Main St., Newtown. All other services and burial are private.

The service for the 6-year-old will be held at 10 a.m. at the Rock Cliff LDS Stake Center, 1000 Suncrest Drive. The viewing will take place Friday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Myers Mortuary in Ogden.

Calling hours for **Lauren Gabrielle Rousseau**, of Danbury, will be held 10 a.m. Thursday at First Congregational Church, 154 Deer Hill Ave., Danbury, followed by a memorial service for friends, co-workers and family at 11 a.m.